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Household 6 Times

For A BTRY, 1/30 FA Spouses

Alpha Battery's (aka The Assassins) FIRST Spouses' Newsletter

I'm excited to write the first newsletter for Alpha Battery that is exclusively for spouses. Are you thinking that it's about time? After being a military spouse for several years, I thought that it's about time we have a fun, informational and creative newsletter that is just for spouses in our battery. My goal is to put these newsletters out at least four times a year; maybe even more depending upon how much intriguing information I come across or come up with. Don't worry, this newsletter won't be filled with just boring information; I'm aiming to include fun topics such as new recipes to try, great books to read, and ways to stretch our dollars during this tough economy. If you're wondering why I'm calling this newsletter Household 6 Times, well its because "household 6" is a term that several service members have used to refer to their spouse; the "household" being where most of us spend the majority of our time and the "6" being the designation for a commander of a battery, battalion, brigade or division. I found the name fitting since most of us are "commanders" of our household. Happy Reading!

-Monique Simmons

FRG Leader

RECIPE CORNER

Whipped Sweet Potato Bake

3 cans (15 oz each) of sweet potatoes drained

¼ c (1/2 stick) of butter melted

1 tsp ground cinnamon

½ c of brown sugar

¼ tsp ground nutmeg

3 c of miniature marshmallows

Preheat the oven to 350. Beat sweet potatoes, butter, cinnamon, brown sugar and nutmeg in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Spoon into a lightly greased casserole dish and top with marshmallows. Bake 15-20 minutes or until the potato mixture is heated through and marshmallows are lightly browned.

Makes 10 ½ cup servings

ARMY 101...

What you should always know about your soldier

I recently visited the website marriedtothemilitary.com and I came across a great article that talked about what you should always know about your soldier. After reading this article, I couldn't resist not sharing it with the spouses in our battery. The following information is very important to know whether your soldier is deployed or not. This information will assist you with navigating the army system and is also needed if you ever have to send a Red Cross message to your soldier. As a spouse, it is extremely important that you know your soldier's:

- Full Name and Rank
- Social Security Number – Remember that with the military it's your soldier's social that they ask you for. It is very important for you to know this, so please take the time to memorize it if you haven't already. Most often they will ask for the last four of your soldier's social security number.
- Where your soldier is stationed (post and city that the post is located in).
- Unit information at least down to his platoon.
- His MOS (Military Occupation Specialties), in other words, what he does.
- His address for his unit whether stateside or deployed.

Paternity Leave for Soldiers

In the past it was up to a Commander to approve a soldier's leave when they became a father. Now there's an actual policy that grants new dads (whether this is your first child or subsequent) 10 days of non-chargeable leave. Leave must be taken all at once and can be taken up to 45 days of the birth.

If the soldier is overseas at the time of the baby's birth, the soldier can take 10 days non-chargeable leave upon his return to the states, but it must be taken within 60 days of redeployment.

Keep in mind that there are different policies for female soldiers who give birth and also for military families who adopt.



Websites to Visit

[http://sill-www.army.mil/428thfa/
www.sillmwr.com](http://sill-www.army.mil/428thfa/www.sillmwr.com)
www.Armywifetwork.com
www.myarmyonesource.com
www.marriedtothearmy.com

Legal Aspects: Housing Issues

Spouses have the rights to government quarters

Did you know that spouses have the rights to government quarters? According to an article featured in the Army Wife Network's September Newsletter written by CPT Coleman, "Many wives do not know the rights and power they have over their husband's success and the amount of respect that they command from the leaders of the Army". CPT Coleman continued to state that Army wives need to know the rights and protections that Army regulations afford them. According to Army regulations, a spouse and civilian family members have the right to occupy the family's government quarters. CPT Coleman shared that soldiers can be asked to move into the barracks at any time of the command's choosing. It is a privilege not a right to live on post. This is often why BAH (Basic Allowance for Housing) is awarded to a spouse in a divorce or separation.

The importance of having a military clause in your lease

I recently came across some information on marriedtothearmy.com regarding signing a lease with a military clause and I thought that this was important information to share. Generally speaking a military clause can differ from state to state. However, it typically allows you to break your lease under certain conditions:

- If your soldier has a temporary duty assignment that is out of the area for more than 60 days.
- If your soldier separates from the military (ETS).
- If your soldier is killed in action or missing in action.
- If your soldier receives PCS (permanent change of station) orders.

Keep in mind that you cannot break the lease if you are offered military housing. Most leases will state this. The military clause covers everyone who signs the lease. This clause also allows you to break your lease and move back home (if you wish) should your soldier be deployed. Most housing offices can assist you with interpreting the wording of your lease. The bottom line...think twice before you sign a lease without a military clause.

Book Club: *Confessions of a Military Wife* by Mollie Gross

Are you an avid reader? Whether your answer is yes or no, I'll bet you'll enjoy this book! I have had several friends who have read this and they all rave about how fun, witty and honest this book is. This book takes a look at the new generation of the military wife, and who better to write it than a military wife herself. It's definitely made my list of books to read. Check out the reviews on amazon.com. Before you decide to buy it, see if it's available at your local library.

Budgeting

Cheaper Meal Planning

Who doesn't want to save money during these tough economic times? Saving money often involves developing a budget and sticking to it. One of the easiest things you can budget involves meal planning. Meal planning can save time and money. The following steps will help you accomplish sticking to a food budget.

1. Plan ahead
2. Shop at the Commissary
3. Clip Coupons
4. Stock up on items you frequently use
5. Buy in Bulk

The first step is planning ahead. Make a calendar of your meals for the week (or if your ambitious try to do it for the month). By planning your meals you'll often avoid running to the local grocery store for missing ingredients and save money. Also make a shopping list and stick to it. Without a list we often forget what we need and end up running back out to the store or we partake in "impulse buying". Both lead to spending more money. My golden rule is if it's not on the list we're not buying it.

The second step is to shop at the Commissary. It is one of the many benefits that we have being a spouse. I'm not saying that the commissary is perfect because there are times when they simply do not have what I need. I have also found that prices tend to be a bit higher at certain times. Prices seem to be lower when you shop the week before or the week after payday. If shopping at the commissary simply doesn't work for you, then I have another money saving tactic to share; sit down with your local supermarket flyers and plan your meals based on the specials the store is having and what is in season for produce.

Clipping coupons is another way to save money. These days you don't have to buy the Sunday paper to get coupons. You can print off great coupons online at various websites for free. One website that I visit regularly is coupons.com and their coupons are updated monthly. Keep in mind that you can always pick up coupons outside of the Commissary.

The fourth step is to stock up on items that you frequently use when they are on sale and if it is in your budget at that time. Plan a trip to the Commissary when they have their case lot sale going on, you're likely to find great deals on items you frequently use.

Buying in bulk is another way to save money. My advice here is that you need to know your prices because it does not always prove to be cheaper on all items. I have noticed that it is much cheaper to buy diapers, wipes and most produce items in bulk. The local Sam's Club can be a great place to shop, but again it all comes down to knowing your prices. If you want to save even more money consider going in on the membership fee with a friend. You'll each get a card and it will cut your cost down to \$20 (you pay \$20 and your friend pays \$20).